

U.S. Department of Education
2009 No Child Left Behind - Blue Ribbon Schools Program

Type of School: (Check all that apply) ☒ Elementary ☐ Middle ☐ High ☐ K-12 ☐ Other
☐ Charter ☐ Title I ☐ Magnet ☐ Choice

Name of Principal: Ms. Danielle Marrow

Official School Name: Pennington School

School Mailing Address:
20 Fairway Avenue
Mount Vernon, NY 10552-1997

County: Westchester State School Code Number*: 660900010009

Telephone: (914) 665-5105 Fax: (914) 665-5107

Web site/URL: www.mtvernoncsd.org E-mail: ddavis1@mtvernoncsd.org

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge all information is accurate.

(Principal's Signature) Date _____

Name of Superintendent*: Dr. W.L. Tony Sawyer

District Name: Mount Vernon CSD Tel: (914) 665-5201

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

(Superintendent's Signature) Date _____

Name of School Board President/Chairperson: Mr. Charles Stern

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature) Date _____

**Private Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

Original signed cover sheet only should be mailed by expedited mail or a courier mail service (such as USPS Express Mail, FedEx or UPS) to Aba Kumi, Director, NCLB-Blue Ribbon Schools Program, Office of Communications and Outreach, US Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Room 5E103, Washington, DC 20202-8173.

PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

The signatures on the first page of this application certify that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR) requirements is true and correct.

1. The school has some configuration that includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even K-12 schools, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The school has made adequate yearly progress each year for the past two years and has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.
3. To meet final eligibility, the school must meet the state's Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) requirement in the 2008-2009 school year. AYP must be certified by the state and all appeals resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum and a significant number of students in grades 7 and higher must take the course.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2003.
6. The nominated school has not received the No Child Left Behind – Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, or 2008.
7. The nominated school or district is not refusing OCR access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
8. OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
9. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
10. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

All data are the most recent year available.

DISTRICT (Questions 1-2 not applicable to private schools)

1. Number of schools in the district:
- | | |
|-----------|---------------------|
| 11 | Elementary schools |
| 2 | Middle schools |
| 0 | Junior high schools |
| 3 | High schools |
| 0 | Other |
| 16 | TOTAL |

2. District Per Pupil Expenditure: 10898

Average State Per Pupil Expenditure: 17330

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

3. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:

- ☐ Urban or large central city
☒ Suburban school with characteristics typical of an urban area
☐ Suburban
☐ Small city or town in a rural area
☐ Rural

4. 3 Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school.

 If fewer than three years, how long was the previous principal at this school?

5. Number of students as of October 1 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school only:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total	Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0	7	0	0	0
K	15	22	37	8			0
1	27	20	47	9			0
2	33	23	56	10			0
3	22	21	43	11			0
4	19	26	45	12			0
5	26	35	61	Other			0
6	17	32	49				
TOTAL STUDENTS IN THE APPLYING SCHOOL							338

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:

0 %	American Indian or Alaska Native
4 %	Asian
45 %	Black or African American
11 %	Hispanic or Latino
0 %	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
40 %	White
0 %	Two or more races
100 %	Total

Only the seven standard categories should be used in reporting the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the past year: 1 %

This rate is calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

(1)	Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	4
(2)	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	0
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	4
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1.	333
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.012
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	1.201

8. Limited English proficient students in the school: 6 %

Total number limited English proficient 21

Number of languages represented: 6
Specify languages:

Arabic, Portuguese, Spanish, Twi, Bulgarian, Urdu, and Albanian

9. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 32 %

Total number students who qualify: 108

If this method does not produce an accurate estimate of the percentage of students from low-income families, or the school does not participate in the free and reduced-price school meals program, specify a more accurate estimate, tell why the school chose it, and explain how it arrived at this estimate.

10. Students receiving special education services: 15 %

Total Number of Students Served: 52

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional categories.

<u>5</u> Autism	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>2</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>16</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>1</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>25</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>0</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>0</u> Mental Retardation	<u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness
<u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities	<u>0</u> Developmentally Delayed

11. Indicate number of full-time and part-time staff members in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff	
	<u>Full-Time</u>	<u>Part-Time</u>
Administrator(s)	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>
Classroom teachers	<u>18</u>	<u>0</u>
Special resource teachers/specialists	<u>6</u>	<u>0</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>10</u>	<u>0</u>
Support staff	<u>0</u>	<u>3</u>
Total number	<u>36</u>	<u>3</u>

12. Average school student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the Full Time Equivalent of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 23 :1

13. Show the attendance patterns of teachers and students as a percentage. Only middle and high schools need to supply dropout rates. Briefly explain in the Notes section any attendance rates under 95%, teacher turnover rates over 12%, or student dropout rates over 5%.

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Daily student attendance	96%	96%	96%	96%	97%
Daily teacher attendance	95%	95%	97%	95%	95%
Teacher turnover rate	0%	4%	0%	0%	0%

Please provide all explanations below.

14. For schools ending in grade 12 (high schools).

Show what the students who graduated in Spring 2008 are doing as of the Fall 2008.

Graduating class size	0	
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	0	%
Enrolled in a community college	0	%
Enrolled in vocational training	0	%
Found employment	0	%
Military service	0	%
Other (travel, staying home, etc.)	0	%
Unknown	0	%
Total	100	%

PART III - SUMMARY

Pennington School - Mission Statement: The diverse community of Pennington students, teachers, parents, and staff, maintain a core value: Caring For One Another. This social value is encouraged each morning as all of our school population recite the Pennington School Creed. At Pennington, the student body is provided with a positive, challenging learning environment that empowers them to become responsible and productive citizens of the world. Through the partnership of our teachers, students, parents, staff, and community members working purposefully and collaboratively in mutual respect and trust, all of our students are given the opportunity to develop the three pillars upon which Pennington School is based. An integrated, three pillar, pedagogical approach is utilized that incorporates academic, cultural, and social values. Academic excellence is the first pillar of Pennington education which includes a dedicated, teaching staff, and a multitiered student body. The Pennington family believes that the cornerstone for effective learning is literacy. Our goal is to provide a curriculum that will help our students meet or exceed New York State Standards in language arts, mathematics, social studies and science. Our goal is to provide a curriculum that will help our students meet or exceed the New York State Standards in language arts, mathematics social studies and science. An integrated action plan that uses data to prioritize needs, target improvement goals, and coordinate reform around defined benchmarks that will raise academic achievement in literacy and mathematics is implemented using proven reform elements which strengthen the core academic program. Through our commitment to create a safe, positive, innovative learning environment where academics, creativity submerged in the arts, music, theater and media, self-esteem and caring about each other are nurtured, the unique strengths and needs of every student are prioritized. Our students achieve high standards by being challenged through standards driven instruction and being active participants in their education; empowering them to think for themselves, make informed decisions, and reach their maximum potential. Our school community has created confident, life-long learners who will be responsible citizens in their community. The second pillar of our program contains many aspects unique to Pennington School that focus on appreciation for and submersion in the arts, music, theater, media, and cultural values. This includes two yearly concerts that include first graders, and Shakespearean drama classes/performances, to name a few. The third pillar of Pennington education is the commitment to teaching social values by emphasizing self-esteem and civic responsibility. Every morning students recite the Pennington School Creed which speaks to showing kindness and concern for everyone. The administration enforces a strict code of conduct based on respect. Students are given the opportunity to participate in multiple leadership roles including student council, safety patrol and the A4 Academy that focuses on character development through volunteer school improvement and technology. All attributes of the Pennington mission are equally important and focus on holistically developing a quality student for current and future success.

Pennington Elementary School is a kindergarten to sixth grade school located in Mount Vernon, New York. We are a suburban school with characteristics typical of an urban area consisting of 338 students. Pennington School is a kindergarten through sixth grade elementary school located at the northern end of Mount Vernon, New York. Our original school building is 79 years old; with a “modern” addition that was built in 2006. We are a suburban school with characteristics typical of an urban area home to 338 students in grades pre-kindergarten to six. Pennington School is in good physical condition and well maintained.

The school houses the following general education classes: two half day pre-kindergarten classes, two full day kindergarten classes, two first grade classes, three second grade classes, two third grade classes, two fourth grade classes, two fifth grade classes, one of which is an inclusion 25 :1:2 class, and two sixth grade classes. 8 students are enrolled in our grade three through five (8: 3:1)autistic class and 17 students are enrolled in our special education class grades five and six (17:1:1) We have one English as a Second Language (ESL) pull-out program for eligible students in grades kindergarten through grade six. The administration is comprised of one Principal and one Assistant Principal. The staff includes seventeen classroom teachers. Support personnel include two remedial reading teachers, one ESL teacher, one physical education teacher, one music teacher,

one art teacher, and eight teacher aides. Student support services personnel include one occupational therapist, one physical therapist, one speech teacher, one school psychologist, one resource teacher, and one school social worker, all on a part-time basis. Additional staff includes two secretaries, six school lunch aides, one nurse, three cafeteria staff and one school security guard.

Pennington School continues to build upon its strengths and accomplishments. The entire Pennington community has been commended for achieving national recognition as a high performing, gap closing school two years in a row. In general, the overall academic benchmark has increased. Specifically, the 5th grade achieved 98.21% mastery on the state wide social studies test. Likewise, 94% of the 3rd graders, 92% of 4th graders, 98% of 5th graders, 95% of the 6th graders, and 100 % of the 7th graders met and exceeded the New York State standards on the New York State English Language Arts test. Our student's also achieved stellar success on the NYS Math Assessment. 98% of the 3rd graders, 98% of the 4th graders, 95% of the 5th graders, 100% of the 6th graders, and 100% of the 7th graders met and exceeded the New York State standards on the math test. This success can be attributed partially to the revamping of the school's reading and math program. The 90 minute block has been further modified to promote an increased love of literacy, while two reading specialists push in to the classrooms. The reading specialists also use a team-teaching approach that enhances the inculcation of specified subject matter while supporting the classroom teacher with any individual student academic challenges. Some credit has to be given to the administration and teachers who decided that they wanted to, collectively, focus on and improve student achievement. Other academically enhancing features of the Pennington community are the monthly writing contest and the student of the month selections. Students are asked to write about specific topics which are connected to the Reading Street program and the ELA curriculum. The winners of the monthly writing contest are then selected to read their winning essays during the monthly reading assembly program. In addition, many of our students have been the recipients of both national and corporate awards and training programs that address mental, emotional, social, and physical awareness. Two of our students participated in the Junior National Young Leadership Conference in Washington D.C. Our seventh and sixth grade girls have participated in the Girls Leadership Academy. Both programs mentor young students for future leadership roles. Our sixth graders are able to enjoy the Free Teens USA program which explains the importance of healthy relations between teenage girls and boys. Also, the March of Dimes Organization and Commerce Bank Money Sense for Kids are two very innovative programs that promote growth in our student body. Finally, The Westchester Fit Kids is an organization that Pennington students utilize to benefit them in health and fitness.

PART IV - INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. Assessment Results:

The New York State Report Card provides performance data for Pennington School students on measures required by the Federal No Child Left Behind Act. This report indicates how well students are progressing towards meeting the New York State Learning Standards in all discipline areas for each school year. Students are assessed using standards-based numerical indicators. A numeric score of 4+ or 4 means that the student has exceeded the Standards. A score of 3+ or 3 means the student is meeting the Standards. A score of 2+ or 2 means that the student is approaching the standards. A score of 1 indicates that the student is experiencing difficulty meeting the standards. A score of 0 indicates that the student is not meeting the standards. NYSTART has provided Pennington School the data from the state test results which indicate that Pennington School has met the Adequate Yearly Progress for the accountability groups for all students including English Language learners, special education, regular education, and inclusion students as they have sustained proficiency levels 3 and 4 in grades 4, 5, and 6 on the English Language Arts and Mathematics State Exams for the years 2002 through 2008. For the school year 2008, grade 7 students attending Pennington School sustained proficiency levels 3 and 4 on the ELA and Math state assessments. The following scores are examples of the sustained achievement of all Pennington students against measured standards as they competed with all students throughout New York State on the New York State Report Card.

In the school year 2002-2003, Pennington School students scored 95% in level 3-4 on the English Language Arts test. In 2003-2004, students scored 100% in level 3-4. In 2004 -2005, the students scored 93% in level 3-4. For the school year 2005-6 grade 3 students scored 78%, grade 4 students scored 86%, grade 5 students scored 89% and grade 6 students scored 77%. In Mathematics for the school year 2002-2003, the students scored 100% in level 3-4. In the school year 2004-05, the students scored 93%. In the school year 2005-2006, students in grade 3 scored 95%, students in grade 4 scored 90%, students in grade 5 scored 74%, and students in grade 6 scored 79%. In Science, students in grade 4 for the school year 2002-2003 scored 94%. In the school year 2003-2004 students scored 88%. In the school year 2004-2005 students scored 98%. In the school year 2005-2006 the students scored 100%.

Knowledge gained from the New York State Report Card define educational priorities by identifying strengths and weaknesses in specific skill areas in which students are in need of improvement. Students identified, receive academic intervention services through which alternatives are proposed to strengthen instructional goals and objectives. Teachers make necessary changes in curriculum and instruction to remedy performance gaps. Assessments are designed to help ensure that all students reach high learning standards. Using data, in the context of the Commissioner's Regulations, serves as the catalyst for improving instruction for all students including special education students by increasing opportunities for inclusion into the general education educational program. Data is also used to implement effective strategies for meeting the needs of the ELL population as well.

2. Using Assessment Results:

At the beginning of the school year, each teacher individually assesses students using the District's Core Curriculum reading and mathematics placement tests, the Diagnostic Reading Assessment tool (DRA), data and item analysis from the New York State standardized reading and mathematics exams, data from the school report card, as well as, teacher prepared assessment tools to identify each student's strengths and weaknesses in order to improve overall student academic performance.

Assessment data drives best practices in curriculum and instruction: teacher model, differentiated and small group instruction, teacher-student conference, peer to peer learning, cooperative learning groups, think-alouds, use of graphic organizers, rubric assessment, and core curriculum unit assessments throughout the year specifically geared to the needs of the students.

Students identified as in need of improvement receive AIS services including remediation with reading specialists on a daily basis, learning resource teacher, speech therapist, psychologist, social worker, occupational therapist, and physical therapist.

The Balanced Literacy Program in grades K-6 utilizes test data that is aligned with the New York State Standards to provide students with leveled readers that are used independently by general education, special education, and ELL students for enrichment and academic intervention.

During curriculum meetings and common planning periods, teachers on a grade level collaborate to analyze on-going student data and work and then share and devise alternate strategies for those students who are struggling in reading and mathematics as well as instructional strategies that support higher level thinking skills, problem solving, and applied learning.

Pennington School implements an intensive test sophistication program in grades 3-6 which is geared to support student achievement on the New York State exams.

On an on-going basis, task-based initiatives school-wide are highlighted to motivate students to meet performance standards in literacy.

Students in need of additional academic support attend extended-day tutorial programs during the months of October through May.

Administration, resource personnel, and turn-key staff provide teacher workshops throughout the year to provide professional development in those areas of teacher concern to meet the special needs of students.

3. Communicating Assessment Results:

Copies of the ELA and Mathematics scores on an individual student report are given to all parents each school year. The teachers, parents, and students set aside a specific time to applaud the school's accomplishments by having a school celebration.

Communication with parents, students, and community as a whole is on-going throughout the school year. In September, Pennington School invites the parents to attend "Meet and Greet" night at which time parents gain knowledge of the New York State Learning Standards and Assessments that are aligned with District curriculum which set forth the academic expectations required of their children.

Through a school-based compact team, emphasis is placed on both the involvement and meaningful participation of administration, teachers, parents, and students in collaborative decision-making. The assessments become tools used by teachers, parents and students to enrich student understanding by providing specific activities to strengthen weaknesses and foster skills already mastered. The Compact Team members engage in an on-going process to develop goals and objectives, and create action plans that translate into observable, effective strategies to support student achievement.

Progress reports are mailed to parents, and at the end of each marking period, parents are invited to conference with teachers upon receiving their child's report card.

Throughout the school year, via e-mail and weekly newsletters, parents are informed of their child's successes as well as suggestions as to how the parent can work with their child on homework assignments.

4. Sharing Success:

Pennington School was one of only 27 schools in the entire United States and Canada to receive New York's 2005 Exemplary Reading Award by the International Reading Association.

In 2006-2007, Pennington School was recognized as a High Achieving Gap Closing School.

In 2008, Mrs. Danielle Marrow, principal, was honored for receiving the Excellence in Education Award by the Mount Vernon Chamber of Congress.

Throughout the course of several years, Mrs. Marrow has mentored new assistant principals who visited the school on a daily basis to observe the Pennington School model of best curriculum practices. Pennington School's Reading Specialists, have and continue to, conduct professional development workshops for the District's teachers on the implementation of effective teaching strategies to improve student academic achievement. Pennington School is presently the host school for mentoring of new teachers to the district. Furthermore, Pennington's ESL teacher has presented workshops to model and share strategies that work for ELL students in the acquisition of the English language.

PART V - CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Curriculum:

The students at Pennington School are provided with a positive, challenging learning environment that empowers them to become responsible and productive citizens of the world. Pennington is based upon three pillars: Academics, cultural and social values. The first pillar of our program is academic excellence. The second pillar of our program is appreciation for and submersion in the arts, music, theater and media. The third pillar of Pennington education is the commitment to teaching social values. Our focus is on building both self-esteem and civic responsibility.

The core of each curriculum area and how students are engaged in significant content based on high standards is as follows:

The Mount Vernon City School District is committed to ensuring that students receive high quality instruction. The district has selected the Scott Foresman Reading Street Program for kindergarten through sixth grade. This literacy program encompasses thematic units, word study, balanced literacy, and the six traits of writing. Teachers are required to expand English Language Arts instruction throughout 90-120 minute mathematics and social studies units.

The elementary social studies program introduces important concepts and generalizations from history, geography, and social sciences through an integrated study of children and their families, homes, schools, neighborhoods, and communities. In the early years, children develop a foundation for the entire social studies program and a beginning sense of efficacy as participating citizens.

Students begin with their familiar environment and advance to families, homes, schools, neighborhoods, and communities in other environments. This approach enhances students' abilities to examine the perspectives of children in other places and times. Students learn to work in groups, to share, to respect the rights of others, and to care for themselves and their possessions. They acquire knowledge of history to understand the present and plan for the future. Social studies at this level provides students with the skills needed for problem solving and decision making, as well as for making thoughtful value judgments. Social studies skills are not learned in isolation, but rather in context as students gather, organize, use and present information. These skills are introduced, applied, reinforced, and remediated within the framework of the kindergarten- sixth grade social studies program.

The vision of the International Language Program is to prepare our students with the knowledge, skills, and cross-cultural understanding in order to become global citizens in their communities and assume leadership roles in the national and international workforce. Pennington School housed a cohort of seventh graders for the 2007-2008 school year who participated in the foreign language program.

Pennington School follows the Mount Vernon City School District Math Curriculum. The curriculum incorporates a strong conceptual knowledge of mathematics through the use of concrete experiences. To assist the students in the understanding and application of mathematical concepts, the mathematics curriculum provides learning experiences which promote communication, reasoning, and problem solving skills.

Our standards based science program provides opportunities for students to develop understandings and skills necessary to function productively as problem-solvers in a scientific and technological world. The science curriculum is integrated into all curriculum areas and develops ready and vocabulary skills in the context of Science.

The philosophy of the physical education program at Pennington Elementary school encompasses three general areas of development for each individual child. It is our aim to encourage the physical, emotional, and social growth of each student. The physical education program is designed for developing physical fitness, increase movement skills, promote social skills and create an appreciation of physical activity.

The curriculum in grades K-3 focuses on health related components as well as sports related skills. Listed below are some skills that are covered throughout the year:

1. spatial awareness
2. chasing, fleeing and dodging skills
3. jumping and landing
4. balancing skills
5. throwing and catching skills
6. parachute and hula hoop activities
7. physical fitness activities
8. dribbling skills using the feet and hands
9. cooperative activities and team building games
10. circus arts
11. scooter activities
12. jump rope skills
13. volleyball skills

The overall objectives of the curriculum for grades 4-6 are listed below:

1. Students will develop a positive attitude towards fitness, sports and recreation.
2. Students will increase their levels of fitness, strength, endurance, and coordination.
3. Students will learn respect for oneself, teachers, and the property of others.
4. Students will know and understand the skills and regulations necessary to play a variety of sports.
5. Students will develop good sportsmanship and teamwork skills

Physical Education units include: Cooperative games, Physical Fitness, Soccer, Basketball, Volleyball, Jump Rope, Team Handball, Circus Arts, Tennis, and Wiffle Ball.

The Music Program at Pennington is New York State Standards based with class offerings in Music Theory given in step wise increments such as Beginning Theory, Basic Theory, Intermediate, and Advanced for students in grades four, five and six. Emphasis is made on the Global and National aspects of Music Education along with current and past historic references for performance and appreciation. Instrumental, choral, and string ensemble classes are a part of the curriculum with beginner classes in each category. Music as an Art and Performance skill accentuates and promotes all levels of academics and cultural knowledge and is an integral part of our education process.

Our art program strives to educate the whole child. We recognize the arts ability to foster intellectual, social and creative growth. We encourage this growth by exposing the children to a wide variety of mediums and to creative expression in its social, historical and cultural context. Our art units are strongly based on the other curriculum area so as to complete the educational circuit. Our art program strives to teach critical thinking, analysis and problem solving. This allows students to explore different solutions to problems and develop divergent thinking. These skills ARE the most fundamental to the creative process.

Our program goals:

- To develop each student's potential for expression
- To build a sense of self confidence and individuality
- To cultivate the imagination
- To develop resourcefulness
- To recognize and respect diverse artistic, cultural and historic expressions

To develop problem solving strategies
To gain technical knowledge

Through a federal grant we are currently developing arts based math and science lessons. We will be tracking students for three years to evaluate the benefits of such a curriculum as measured by increased achievement on NYS standardized testing in math and science.

These lessons will be designed by our NYSATA award winning art teacher.

We recognize that few students will actually become artists, but many will be scientists, lawyers, doctors, engineers, and writers. The skills learned in our program will prepare them to meet the challenges their generation will face with fresh new ideas.

2a. (Elementary Schools) Reading:

At Pennington School the literacy program is aligned with district and state ELA standards. Our comprehensive balanced literacy program is implemented through an uninterrupted literacy block that consists of: interactive read aloud, shared reading and writing, guided reading and writing, and independent reading and writing.

Assessment -based planning is the core of the effectiveness of this model. Formal and informal reading assessments are administered and analyzed intermittently by the classroom teacher and support staff in order to create an individualized plan for all students. Also, Developmental Reading Assessments are individually administered, providing teachers a more comprehensive view of the students reading abilities and reading behaviors. This data enables the teacher to group the students based on readiness levels and recommend students for Academic Intervention Services provided by the reading specialists and other support staff. Teachers tailor instruction to suit students' changing instructional needs. Reading and writing portfolios for each student also serve to enhance the assessment process by monitoring students' mastery of curriculum, revealing a range of skills and understanding, supporting instructional goals; reflecting change and growth over a period of time; and encouraging student, teacher, and parent reflection.

Each classroom at Pennington is an intentionally created literacy-rich environment emphasizing the importance of speaking, reading and writing in the learning of all students. Materials and resources are selected that will help to facilitate language and literacy opportunities and offer a wide variety of levels and interests. Classrooms are thoughtfully designed to include word walls, charts, literacy centers, and student work. The print-rich environment offers a wealth of opportunities for students to make use of print and practice literacy habits and skills.

The "Love of Reading" is celebrated at Pennington School through reading reward ceremonies, "Books Are A Gift -Give Always", "Book Teas", "Literature Circles and Book Clubs", "Caught Reading" certificates, "Book In A Bag" and "Shared and Paired Reading", Drop Everything And Read" and monthly "Writing Contest" activities.

At Pennington we believe when teaching reading "One size does not fit all" and through a variety of meaningful literacy experiences, we can instill the love of reading in every child.

2b. (Secondary Schools) English:

This question is for secondary schools only

3. Additional Curriculum Area:

Pennington School offers the 24 Game – First In Math Online Program to all of our Grade 5 general education, inclusion, and special education students to help them gain significant improvement in math proficiency and used on a daily basis, increases fluency with number sense. Online games range from Addition to multi-step Algebra and are organized into Skill Sets. Each Skill Set is comprised of three sequential 24 Games, labeled 1, 2 and 3. Each game builds upon the skills acquired in previous games. Bonus Games are targeted to skills students need to master at each grade level, based on national standards.

The First in Math “team” format enables students of all ability levels to contribute to the success of their teams’ scores. Studies show that children who use the site on a regular basis experience significant math gains. First in Math creates a partnership among students, teachers, and parents to develop academic and social values in all of our children, an essential component of Pennington’s mission as a school of academic excellence.

First in Math is an easy-to-use, educational website that has our students excited about math in the classroom as well as at home. The specially-designed “games” develop and reinforce basic concepts, and have proven to be a great way for students and their parents to have fun at home while learning skills that will last a lifetime.

A Pre-test/Post-test module records each student’s proficiency with basic facts. The program includes assessment of each student’s skill improvement.

The Know and Show modules provide a unique way for students to experience the type of problems found in standardized tests. Students solve problems from nine categories that tie to national standards.

Administrators, teachers, and teaching assistants have been witness to the enthusiasm in our students. Currently, our students rank 1st in the Mount Vernon School District in time on task and the number of problems solved. As a result, our students have earned the highest number of accumulated stickers. Each student has a user name and password.

4. Instructional Methods:

At Pennington School, all of our teachers (K-6) strongly support a Balanced Literacy Program. Initially, teachers use the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) as an assessment and instructional tool that documents students’ development as readers over time within our literature-based instructional reading program. Students are instructed through teacher modeling key skills, using read-aloud and shared reading strategies, ability-grouped instruction in phonics, comprehension skills, and writing, guided reading and writing, and independent, leveled reading and writing. Exemplars of quality work are presented for students who need to see and be expected to produce.

Teachers collect student feedback on a regular basis to determine what was learned and what was confusing. Students are placed in flexible groups that change as a result of skill instruction and ongoing observation and assessment. Assessments used in an ongoing manner improve instruction and inform targeted instructional support. Our teachers position assessment of student skills, knowledge, and progress at the center of their teaching and as a tool that is necessary to facilitate student learning and to direct their teaching focus and efforts.

In addition, a strong remedial reading program is in force for those students who fall below grade level as indicated by data from standardized test scores and baseline assessments. Reading teachers provide both a pull-out and push-in program, working collaboratively with the classroom teachers on a daily basis.

Teachers augment the reading program by having the freedom and flexibility to use various modalities and many different approaches to enable students to achieve high academic performance. Team planning by teachers and administrators for mixed ability classrooms is essential as instructional approaches and strategies need continual review and change in order to service students who have individual learning needs with the basic skills necessary to become emergent readers and writers. Teachers act upon suggestions for improving the classroom environment and instruction through planning tiered instruction and assignments, adjusting the level of complexity of the tasks for mastery of the particular skill. All students are given work within their capacity for success. Teachers differentiate their teaching to support students who struggle to learn. Each student focuses on the concept and is appropriately challenged. At Pennington School the concept of creating multiple paths for learning is prominent in all classrooms.

Book in the Bag is a home-based weekly program that focuses on the child and the parent engaging in reading. The child reads to the parent or the parent reads to the child from a book chosen by the child from the classroom library after which a specific assignment is given to be completed.

Administrators frequent the classrooms to observe best curriculum practices utilized in the classroom where it is evident that activities are clear, well organized and based on the New York Learning Standards. Students are more actively involved in their learning; teachers provide for peer-to-peer learning, cooperative learning groups, individual reading/writing conferences, use of graphic organizers, and self-assessments through the use of rubrics.

In our commitment to educate each child to the maximum extent appropriate, Pennington School services inclusion and special education students with additional support services that benefit the special needs of students with disabilities. Teachers differentiate instruction to ensure that students receive the attention, challenge, and support they need to succeed. Scaffolding of instruction begins with students taking small steps and building to larger leaps of learning.

Many of our teachers conduct after school or early morning tutoring classes for students in need of improvement in reading and/or mathematics.

Our students gain more confidence as they witness success and consequently have a good feeling about themselves as a result of their accomplishments. Our increased scores on state mandated tests can attest to this.

5. Professional Development:

Professional development at Pennington School is designed to help support the needs of our staff. The staff members are exposed to real-world strategies and practical classroom techniques that impact on improving student achievement. Through the collaborative efforts, support, and time spent in team planning by teachers, staff, and parents, student learning is aligned with the NYS content standards. Listed below are the goals and implementation strategies for professional development at Pennington School.

Goals:

- Continue to have the staff trained in pedagogical strategies that emphasize critical analysis and problem solving in different content areas.

- Provide high quality professional development in all core areas for staff members and parents as part of an overall plan for the school.
- Analyze data using a variety of resources such as: Data Warehouse, NY Start and the School Report card.

Implementation Strategies:

- District administrators for English Language Arts, Social Studies, Science, and Mathematics conduct workshops that provide teachers with strategies, teaching techniques, and student activities that are aligned with the New York State Standards performance indicators. Teachers join District administrators in working collaboratively to address curriculum guidelines, grade level expectations, pacing guides, and New York State performance indicators and introduce techniques and teaching strategies to use with students in need of improvement.
- Specialists attend professional development workshops and conferences in their fields and then act as turnkey coaches in conducting training workshops for classroom teachers. Staff have been trained to use our literacy library with their students to enhance and encourage independent reading and research.
- Teachers participate in Balanced Literacy instructional programs and return to train colleagues on each grade level.
- Administration continues to facilitate staff curricula workshops and guide staff with model curricular materials to enhance present curricula; for example, balanced literacy components and best teaching practices.
- Continue to encourage sharing of professional articles/readings that will enhance instruction.
- Bring together teams of teachers who discuss the teaching/learning process and plan for ways of sharing this information with colleagues.
- Continue to align curriculum, both vertically and horizontally, in specific subject areas and among grade levels.
- Continue to encourage the use of research conducted through Internet resources and specific professional organizations.
- Continue to welcome visitations by textbook companies to apprise staff of the current practices in education that support our curriculum in Language Arts and Mathematics.
- Collaborate and conduct intervisitations with Mount Vernon colleagues regarding specific target areas.
- Provide time for reflection as an important part of improving the teaching learning practice.

One of the districts most productive staff development series was presented by Dr. Paula Bevin. Dr. Bevin's staff development focused on Charlotte Danielson's book *A Frame Work for Teaching*. Through hands on activities and researched based data staff members learned about how to improve student learning and what good teaching is. This staff development was presented over several months giving staff members' time to internalize and utilize the hands on activities..

6. School Leadership:

The leadership structure and the leadership role of the principal can best be defined as respectful and supportive. As the principal of the school Mrs. Marrow ensures that the views and concerns of all her staff members are addressed. The Pennington staff members are valued, respected, and treated as professionals in a learning community.

Listed below are the characteristics associated with Pennington's Instructional leadership:

- The principal communicates to staff members daily.
- A safe environment has been established for staff and students.

- The principal monitors school performance with Data Warehouse, Bench Mark Assessments and the School Report card.
- Goals are communicated to staff members.
- The administrative staff provides ongoing observations and evaluations to ensure effective instruction.
- The leadership team coordinates curriculum and monitors progress.
- Pennington administrators maintain high visibility.
- Incentives are provided to staff members.
- Pennington administrators select school based professional development sessions to target the needs of the staff.

The Pennington community maintains a core value, “Caring For One Another.” Having received recognition as a High Achieving Gap Closing School, our school is committed to encouraging student participation in all learning experiences and activities. Providing quality education and ensuring that policies, programs, relationships and resources focus on improving student achievement is evident when our students are consistently awarded prizes in district and county fairs. We are very proud of our students who continue to score successfully on the English Language Arts, Math, Science and Social Studies New York State Assessments.

The Pennington staff is dedicated to its educational mission of providing quality instruction, which enhances the academic and social development of all its students. Our educational program is designed to develop the whole child, with emphasis on his or her unique strengths and needs. We believe a child’s learning experiences should be joyful and successful. We encourage and promote positive self-esteem and confidence by building on each child’s strengths.

Our commitment to excellence is accomplished because our families and staff work together purposefully with mutual respect and trust in the pursuit of educational excellence for our children.

PART VI - PRIVATE SCHOOL ADDENDUM

This section is for private schools only

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 3 Test: 2005-2006

Edition/Publication Year: New York State Testing Program

Publisher: McGraw-Hill

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar		
SCHOOL SCORES					
Level 3 and Level 4	98	89	95		
Level 4	40	36	28		
Number of students tested	48	53	58		
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100		
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0		
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced Lunch/Socio-Economic Disadvantaged Students					
level 3 and 4	93	71	95		
level 4	29	7	10		
Number of students tested	14	14	21		
2. Racial/Ethnic Group (specify subgroup): Black/African American					
level 3 and 4	96	88	94		
level 4	22	28	21		
Number of students tested	27	25	34		
3. (specify subgroup): White					
level 3 and 4	100	90	96		
level 4	73	50	38		
Number of students tested	15	20	24		
4. (specify subgroup):					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
Number of students tested					

Notes:

The NY State Exams in ELA and Math are available in grades 3,4,5, & 6 beginning in 2005-2006. This is the data derived from the State School Report Card from 2005- 2008. Special Education students are not included in supgroup due to lack of data.

Subject: Reading

Grade: 3

Test: New York State Testing Program

Edition/Publication Year: 2005-2006

Publisher: McGraw Hill

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing Month	Jan	Jan	Jan		
SCHOOL SCORES					
Level 3 and Level 4	94	78	78		
Level 4	31	15	10		
Number of students tested	48	54	58		
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100		
Number of students alternatively assessed	2	1	1		
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced Lunch/Socio-Economic Disadvantaged Students					
level 3 and 4	86	64	71		
level 4	14	7	0		
Number of students tested	14	14	21		
2. Racial/Ethnic Group (specify subgroup): Black/African American					
level 3 and 4	89	76	67		
level 4	15	12	8		
Number of students tested	27	25	36		
3. (specify subgroup): White					
level 3 and 4	100	81	95		
level 4	73	19	14		
Number of students tested	15	21	19		
4. (specify subgroup): Hispanic/Latino					
level 3 and 4					
level 4					
Number of students tested	3	6	3		

Notes:

The NY State Exams in ELA and Math are available in grades 3,4,5, & 6 beginning in 2005-2006. This is the data derived from the State School Report Card from 2005- 2008. Special Education students are not included as a subgroup due to lack of data.

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 4

Test: New York State Testing Program

Edition/Publication Year: 2005-2006

Publisher: McGraw-Hill

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing Month	Jan	Jan	Jan		
SCHOOL SCORES					
Level 3 and Level 4	98	89	90		
Level 4	47	27	24		
Number of students tested	51	55	68		
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100		
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0		
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced Lunch/Socio-Economic Disadvantaged Students					
level 3 and 4	92	83	88		
level 4	33	17	18		
Number of students tested	12	18	17		
2. Racial/Ethnic Group (specify subgroup): Black/African American					
level 3 and 4	100	84	88		
level 4	48	16	20		
Number of students tested	23	32	40		
3. (specify subgroup): White					
level 3 and 4	100	94	95		
level 4	68	39	32		
Number of students tested	19	18	22		
4. (specify subgroup):					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
Number of students tested					

Notes:

The NY State Exams in ELA and Math are available in grades 3,4,5, & 6 beginning in 2005-2006. This is the data derived from the State School Report Card from 2005- 2008. Special Education students are not included as a subgroup due to lack of data.

Subject: Reading

Grade: 4

Test: ELA

Edition/Publication Year: 2005-2006

Publisher: New York State Testing Program

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing Month	Jan	Jan	Jan		
SCHOOL SCORES					
Level 3 and Level 4	92	78	86		
Level 4	23	13	15		
Number of students tested	52	55	66		
Percent of total students tested	100	100	98		
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced Lunch/Socio-Economic Disadvantaged Students					
level 3 and 4	85	61	81		
level 4	8	6	6		
Number of students tested	13	18	16		
2. Racial/Ethnic Group (specify subgroup): Black African/American					
level 3 and 4	96	69	87		
level 4	26	9	13		
Number of students tested	23	32	39		
3. (specify subgroup): White					
level 3 and 4	95	94	81		
level 4	26	17	24		
Number of students tested	19	18	21		
4. (specify subgroup): Hispanic/Latino					
level 3 and 4					
level 4					
Number of students tested	8	3	5		

Notes:

The NY State Exams in ELA and Math are available in grades 3,4,5, & 6 beginning in 2005-2006. This is data derived from the State School Report Card from 2005- 2008.

Special Education students are not included as a subgroup due to lack of data.

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 5

Test: New York State Testing Program

Edition/Publication Year: 2005-2006

Publisher: McGraw-Hill

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar		
SCHOOL SCORES					
Level 3 and Level 4	95	89	71		
Level 4	40	23	14		
Number of students tested	57	66	34		
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100		
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced Lunch/Socio-Economic Disadvantaged Students					
level 3 and 4	100	80	54		
level 4	29	13	0		
Number of students tested	17	15	13		
2. Racial/Ethnic Group (specify subgroup): Black/African American					
level 3 and 4	94	86	64		
level 4	28	12	0		
Number of students tested	32	42	22		
3. (specify subgroup): White					
level 3 and 4	96	96	92		
level 4	44	42	50		
Number of students tested	25	24	12		
4. (specify subgroup):					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
Number of students tested					

Notes:

The NY State Exams in ELA and Math are available in grades 3,4,5, & 6 beginning in 2005-2006. This is the data derived from the State School Report Card from 2005- 2008. Special Education students are not included as a subgroup due to lack of data.

Subject: Reading

Grade: 5

Test: New York State Testing Program

Edition/Publication Year: 2005-2006

Publisher: McGraw-Hill

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing Month	Jan	Jan	Jan		
SCHOOL SCORES					
Level 3 and Level 4	96	77	89		
Level 4	20	8	26		
Number of students tested	55	65	35		
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100		
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced Lunch/Socio-Economic Disadvantaged Students					
level 3 and 4	94	53	86		
level 4	6	7	7		
Number of students tested	17	15	14		
2. Racial/Ethnic Group (specify subgroup): Black/African American					
level 3 and 4	94	66	87		
level 4	6	5	9		
Number of students tested	31	41	23		
3. (specify subgroup): White					
level 3 and 4	100	96	92		
level 4	35	13	58		
Number of students tested	20	20	10		
4. (specify subgroup): Hispanic/Latino					
level 3 and 4					
level 4					
Number of students tested	2	4	1		

Notes:

The NY State Exams in ELA and Math are available in grades 3,4,5, & 6 beginning in 2005-2006. This is the data derived from the State School Report Card from 2005- 2008. Special Education students are not included as a subgroup due to lack of data.

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 6

Test: New York State Testing Program

Edition/Publication Year: 2005-2006

Publisher: McGraw-Hill

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar		
SCHOOL SCORES					
Level 3 and Level 4	100	91	79		
Level 4	32	23	25		
Number of students tested	63	47	53		
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100		
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0		
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced Lunch/Socio-Economic Disadvantaged Students					
level 3 and 4	100	100	67		
level 4	13	20	19		
Number of students tested	15	15	21		
2. Racial/Ethnic Group (specify subgroup): Black/African American					
level 3 and 4	100	89	77		
level 4	21	16	16		
Number of students tested	42	38	43		
3. (specify subgroup): White					
level 3 and 4	100		1		
level 4	0				
Number of students tested	21	9	5		
4. (specify subgroup):					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
Number of students tested					

Notes:

The NY State Exams in ELA and Math are available in grades 3,4,5, & 6 beginning in 2005-2006. This is the data derived from the State School Report Card from 2005- 2008.Special Education is not listed as a subgroup due to lack of data.

Subject: Reading

Grade: 6

Test: New York State Testing Program

Edition/Publication Year: 2005-2006

Publisher: McGraw-Hill

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing Month	Jan	Jan	Jan		
SCHOOL SCORES					
Level 3 and Level 4	95	65	77		
Level 4	8	4	13		
Number of students tested	64	48	52		
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100		
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	1		
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced Lunch/Socio-Economic Disadvantaged Students					
level 3 and 4	80	67	75		
level 4	7	0	5		
Number of students tested	15	15	20		
2. Racial/Ethnic Group (specify subgroup): Black/African American					
level 3 and 4	93	64	74		
level 4	7	0	9		
Number of students tested	42	39	43		
3. (specify subgroup): White					
level 3 and 4	100	67	89		
level 4	6	22	33		
Number of students tested	17	5	4		
4. (specify subgroup): Hispanic/Latino					
level 3 and 4					
level 4					
Number of students tested	5	2	4		

Notes:

The NY State Exams in ELA and Math are available in grades 3,4,5, & 6 beginning in 2005-2006. This is the data derived from the State School Report Card from 2005- 2008. Special Education students are not included as a subgroup due to lack of data.

----- END OF DOCUMENT -----

